

MINUTES  
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION  
JUNE 26, 2012  
7:00 PM

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Kingston called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Answering roll call were Commissioners Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Seidman, Stanton and Chair Kingston, and Student Members Aderhold and Nolan. Staff present: Lisa Schaefer, Human Resources Director and Staff Liaison; Susan Howl, administrative staff; and Ari Klugman, administrative intern.

**III. MEETING AGENDA APPROVED**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee approving the meeting agenda of June 26, 2012.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Seidman and Stanton  
Motion carried.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTED**

**Motion #1 was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Finsness revising the meeting minutes:**

**IV.A.**

Under Item #4 within VI.A. Work Plan, delete the word "and" from the second line and replace it with the word "who."

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Seidman and Stanton  
Motion carried.

**Motion #2 was made by Commissioner Finsness and seconded by Commissioner Stanton approving the meeting minutes with the following change:**

**IV.A. Approve the meeting minutes of May 22, 2012, with the following edits:**

Under Item #8 within VI.A. Work Plan, replace the fourth sentence with "Commissioner Finsness voiced concerns about the messaging and the objectives of the theme as presented by the Chair and supported Commissioner Winnick's statement about being sensitive to our community" and replace the word "divorce" in the sixth sentence with the word "separate."

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Seidman and Stanton  
Nay: Kingston  
Motion carried.

**V. COMMUNITY COMMENT**

There were no community comments.

**VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**VI.A. SELECT REPRESENTATIVE FOR HUMAN SERVICES TASK FORCE**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Bigbee and seconded by Commissioner Seidman that Commissioner Stanton serve as the appointed HRRRC representative on the 2012 Human Services Task Force.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Seidman and Stanton.

Motion carried.

The Task Force will meet three times in October and present a recommendation for 2013 human services funding to the City Council in November.

#### ***VI.B. 2013 ANNUAL WORK PLAN CALENDAR***

Director Schaefer reported that the City Council has requested that boards and commissions follow a more formalized process with regard to annual work plans. It was noted that HRRRC was one of the few commissions with a work plan previously in place. The Council's goal is to meet with commission chairs on September 19<sup>th</sup> to hear the potential work plan items for 2013. This input will be used during the City's overall planning and budgeting process and for the approval of the annual work plan in January.

Director Schaefer and Chair Kingston will begin a draft of the HRRRC's 2013 work plan to bring to the July meeting for discussion. The work plan should be approved by the HRRRC in August, so that the Chair can present it at the City Council work session with commission chairs on September 19. Director Schaefer described the ways in which the Commission work plan can be changed or modified during the year, and noted that a simple deadline change does not require modification of the plan.

Questions and comments:

- How do new student members fit comfortably into the work plan?
- How do student members see themselves involved and adequately informed?
- An orientation for incoming student members is being looked at by the City's Board and Commission Task Force.
- Could student members have input when meeting agendas are created?
- It was suggested that new student members begin their terms in August.
- Could graduating student members return to serve on commissions while attending local colleges?
- Questions and/or concerns should be forwarded to Commissioner Winnick, who is representing HRRRC on the City's Board and Commission Task Force.

#### ***VI.C. 2012 WORK PLAN UPDATE***

##### **1. Monitor Domestic Partner Ordinance**

With Commissioner Cashmore being absent, Chair Kingston will check with him to see if this item can be discussed at the August Commission meeting.

##### **2. Initiate Census Research Funding Recommendation**

Commissioner Stanton reemphasized the importance of current census data and the value of establishing outreach to new members of the community. Turning Val Burke's recommendation into action, Commissioner Stanton met with Greg Hanks, Director of the Southdale YMCA, to see how they are tapping into the community and what is working well. The Y is in a partnership with Edina Rotary and Cornelia during the school year, providing round-trip transportation for students to participate in programs after school. During the summer, Rotary also provides scholarships for 20 children to experience Camp Kici Yapi. Director Hanks indicated that the Y would be willing to partner with HRRRC

for “Listen and Learn” sessions. When asked about locating community leaders among the various populations, he reported that the Y does not keep this kind of information.

The Commissioners discussed various ways to partner with the Y to engage the community in a diversity event:

- Try hosting a meeting for one ethnicity at a time. Think of each community as being different and unique, and use different strategies in each community. This would be a way to identify meaningful issues and provide a learning experience.
- Could a “meet and greet” event be planned with the Y later this fall? It could be a “mixer” in order to get to know each other.
- HRRC could become a vehicle for recommendations as a result of the community gatherings. Events of this type could take up to one year, creating opportunities to do a number of things together. HRRC would be able to listen and learn from each community.
- There should be two phases. Phase I: Identify people from ethnic groups for a focus group activity of six months to one year. Phase II: The next step could be a community-wide event.
- Listening to community concerns could become problematic for HRRC if there are expectations that HRRC will be able to solve all concerns. How can the Commission be a partner and help various ethnic groups learn about Edina?
- It is important for the Commission to start small in a non-threatening way as a partner with the Y.
- HRRC does not have to be the problem-solver. The emphasis should be on the changing demographics and giving groups the opportunity to be heard. The Commission could take opinions into consideration for the City.
- Commissioners Stanton and Newell will continue discussions with the Y and Cornelia School staff, bringing back information about ways to partner with new diverse groups.

### 3. Anti-Bullying Event and Education

Commissioner Finsness and Student Member Nolan shared information about the upcoming event on June 29<sup>th</sup> at the Edina Theater. It is a 45-minute documentary entitled “Minnesota Nice? A Documentary on Bullying in Minnesota Public Schools.” The documentary was created by graduating Edina senior Alec Fischer. With a focus on students’ stories of being bullied, Alec took on the seven-month project of interviewing, editing and filming.

Commissioner Finsness reported that “Edina Reads” is receptive about having a community-wide event around the subject of bullying with HRRC being the host during a specific time from December to February. The Commission should consider books for readers from 6<sup>th</sup> grade through adults that have a community perspective and would provide momentum for a City-wide discussion. There are discretionary funds in HRRC’s operational budget that perhaps could be used to lend some support. Commissioners were asked to contact Commissioner Finsness with ideas for books.

(At 8:15 PM, Chair Kingston left the meeting, and Vice Chair Seidman assumed the role of Chair.)

### 4. Marriage Amendment Forum

Because of HRRC’s position against the marriage amendment, Commissioner Stanton has been investigating the legality of the Commission’s involvement in a community-wide educational event/forum. The commissions of the cities of Shoreview and Roseville are hosting an activity on October 4<sup>th</sup> about Project 515—a focus on the 515 laws that are discriminatory against Minnesotans and how to look at creating fairness for all Minnesotans. Because the expenditure of funds could be a legal issue, Commissioner Stanton provided options for the Commission to consider: 1) Do nothing; 2) Host a

neutral forum; 3) Host a free event, advocating the City's position, using a speaker and publicizing it; 4) Bring in a speaker to talk to HRRRC and invite the media; 5) Have a co-host pay for advertising and boldly advocate the City's position; 6) Develop a guest editorial for the local media; and 7) Combination of options.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Finsness to approve writing a guest editorial as identified in option #6, which will increase visibility, put Edina at the forefront and cause more people to jump on the band wagon.**

**Amendment to the motion was made by Commissioner Finsness and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee to state that HRRRC and the City Council will co-sign a letter for the media that addresses the impact the amendment has on Edina.**

Concern was raised that the City Council Members may not wish to do this. Nevertheless, a letter from HRRRC would have more impact if it was co-signed by the Council. It was suggested that the Council Members be queried about this co-endorsement. Commissioner Stanton withdrew his original motion and stated that he would bring back a draft letter for discussion and that the Commission could decide whether to invite the City Council to participate. Commissioner Finsness withdrew her previous amendment to the motion.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Finsness to bring a draft editorial to the next meeting for approval and then approach the Council Members about co-signing it before it is submitted to the newspaper.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Seidman and Stanton

Motion carried.

Commissioner Stanton will send the draft editorial to Director Schaefer to be forwarded to HRRRC Members.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Finsness to also create a subcommittee to explore option #5—finding a co-host to sponsor an Edina social event for taking an advocacy position and without spending any money.**

Ayes: Erhardt, Finsness, Seidman and Stanton

Nay: Bigbee

Motion carried.

Commissioners Stanton and Cashmore and Student Member Aderhold will comprise a sub-committee for handling this effort. Director Schaefer stated we should have the attorney review any agreement with a co-sponsor.

#### 5. Diversity Awareness Event

Prior to leaving the meeting, Chair Kingston announced the subcommittee decided to cancel this event and pulled it off the Commission 2012 Work Plan.

#### 6. Tom Oye Award Criteria

This item was carried over to the July meeting due to the absence of Commissioner Winnick.

#### 7. Supreme Court Decision on Super PAC's

Commissioner Finsness reported that a number of states and counties have voted to approve a resolution calling on Congress to pass a constitutional amendment overturning the Citizens United ruling and for in-state disclosure laws to give voters information about the sources and amounts of corporate spending. The Commissioners agreed that HRRC should take a stand and bring a resolution to the City Council.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Finsness that a proposed resolution be drafted by Commissioner Finsness and brought to the July Commission meeting for approval.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Seidman and Stanton  
Motion carried.

#### VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

Prior to leaving the meeting, Chair Kingston stated (i) HRRC was all copied on an email from Laird Beaver and she would respond to him; (ii) She had sent out resolutions from other cities for the subcommittee to review

#### VIII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioners Erhardt, Bigbee and Stanton discussed the photo ID issue and the fact that it is still under review in the courts. The HRRC should continue to monitor how this proceeds through the courts.

Student Member Nolan reported that this would be her last HRRC meeting. She will be concentrating on her Native American interests through Habitat for Humanity at the Rosebud reservation in July.

Student Member Aderhold plans to return to the Commission in August before beginning his first year in college at the U of M.

Commissioner Finsness requested that the Diversity Awareness Event be on the agenda for the next Commission meeting so that an explanation could be given for why it was determined to remove from the work plan at this time.

#### IX. STAFF COMMENTS

Director Schaefer shared that Candy Fiedler will not prepare minutes for the Commission for the foreseeable future. Administrative Intern Ari Klugman will take on this role for close to the next year. While Director Schaefer is on maternity leave, Assistant City Manager Kurt will assist as the interim Commission liaison.

#### X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business on the Commission Agenda, Vice Chair Seidman declared the meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes approved by HRRC, July 24, 2012

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Susan Howl, Administrative Staff

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Jan Seidman, HRRC Vice Chair